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ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

A. MATHIESON, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.

AND OF THE

SANITARY INSPECTOR

J. FINERON, D.P.A., F.S.I.A., M.R.San.I.

for the year 1944.



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REPORT

OF

THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR THE YEAR 1944.

The report for the year 1944 has been compiled in accordance with the instructions in the special circular issued by the Ministry of Health, and is concerned principally with vital statistics.

EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS FOR 1944.

Birth Rate per 1,000 estimated resident population mid 1944 23·4

Still Births—

Rate per 1,000 total live and still births ... 27

Death Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population 12·6

Deaths from Puerperal causes—

From Puerperal Sepsis 0

From other Puerperal causes 1

Death Rate of Infants under one year of age—

All infants per 1,000 live births ... 79

Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate live births ... 82

Illegitimate per 1,000 illegitimate live births ... 50

Deaths from Cancer (all ages) ... 16

„ Measles (all ages) ... 0

„ Whooping Cough (all ages) ... 0

„ Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age) ... 2

PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES.

The following is an analysis of notified cases of infectious disease under different age groups :—

Age	Scarlet Fever	Diphtheria	Ophthalmia	Puerperal Pyrexia	Para Typh- oid Fever	Polio- myelitis	Pneumonia	Cerebro Spinal Meningitis	Measles
Under 1	...	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	...
1— 2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
2— 3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
3— 4	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
4— 5	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
5—10	3	2	...	...	...	...	1	...	3
10—15	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
15—20	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
20—35	1	2	...	7	...	...	...	...	1
35—45	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
45—65	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Over 65	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Total	6	6	3	7	...	...	1	...	7

TUBERCULOSIS.

Particulars of new cases of Tuberculosis and deaths from the disease during the year 1944 are set out in the following table :—

Age Periods	NEW CASES				DEATHS			
	Respiratory		Non- Respiratory		Respiratory		Non- Respiratory	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0— .....	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	...
1— .....	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	...
5—	1	...	1	...	...	...	1	...
15— .....	...	1	1	...	...	1	1	...
25— .....	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
35—	3	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
45—	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
55— .....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
65 and upwards	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
Totals ...	6	2	4	...	2	1	4	...

A. MATHIESON,
Medical Officer of Health.

REPORT

OF

THE SANITARY INSPECTOR

FOR THE YEAR 1944.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE CITY.

There has been no appreciable change in the main services usually dealt with under this heading. Samples of drinking water which were taken from the public supply for chemical analysis and bacteriological examination were reported to be quiet satisfactory. Most of the houses in the City have the public supply, though there are still a few cottages on the outskirts where the supply is from wells. The question of reconstructing the sewage disposal works is still in abeyance owing to war conditions, but the City Surveyor has stated that it is hoped to commence this work in the near future.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.

The following table shows the number and nature of inspections made during the year :—

Inspections under the Public Health Acts	...	...	...	320
Inspections under the Housing Acts	...	...	...	32
Inspections under the Shops Acts	...	...	...	55
Re-Inspections	...	...	...	340
Visits to Meat Shops	...	...	...	130
Visits to Markets	...	...	...	44
Visits to Cowsheds	...	...	...	48
Visits to Dairies and Milk Shops	...	...	...	56
Visits to Common Lodging Houses	...	...	...	26
Visits to Bakehouses and Factories	...	...	...	65
Smoke Observations	...	...	...	4

NOTICES.

Particulars regarding notices served are as follows :—

Informal Notices served	...	...	84
Statutory Notices served	...	...	8
Informal Notices complied with	...	...	63
Statutory Notices complied with	...	...	8

The majority of the outstanding informal notices were in respect of the replacement of worn-out dustbins, some delay being inevitable owing to the difficulty of obtaining new bins.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

Milk.

The cowsheds and dairy premises in the City are inspected at frequent intervals and the standard of cleanliness has been fairly satisfactory considering the difficulties created by war conditions. One dairyman holds a dealer's licence in respect of Tuberculin Tested milk and Accredited milk. One retailer with premises outside the City holds a supplementary licence for the sale of Pasteurised milk. Samples of milk collected in the City are examined at the County Council's laboratory at Stafford. The chief object of submitting samples of Pasteurised milk for examination is to enable the laboratory authorities to apply the special test which determines whether or not the milk has been effectively pasteurised. The results of samples submitted during the year were as follows :—

Samples				Passed	Failed
Pasteurised	...	...	...	7	1
Tuberculin Tested	...	...	...	5	0
Undesignated (heat treated)	...	...	...	0	2

Unfortunately there is no prescribed standard for so-called "heat treated" milk, and in the absence of such a requirement the standard for Pasteurised milk is used as a basis of comparison.

Meat.

The meat sold in the City is still being received from the Government slaughter-house at Walsall. On the whole this arrangement seems to have been satisfactory, very few complaints having been received. The meat shops in the City are inspected at regular intervals, particular attention being paid to the premises where sausage is manufactured.

Other Foods.

During the year the following articles of food were found to be unfit for human consumption and were voluntarily surrendered to be destroyed :—

Corned Beef	...	3 tins	Hot Pot	...	2 tins
Luncheon Meat	...	27 tins	Soup	...	3 tins
Prem	...	10 tins	Fishpaste	...	3 tins
Steak	...	3 tins	Sauce	...	10 bottles
Pickled Meat	...	2½ cwts.	Peanut Butter	...	1 jar
Bacon	...	36 lbs.	Jam	...	29 jars
Ham	...	16 lbs.	Marmalade	...	6 jars
Sausage	...	80 lbs.	Lyle's Syrup	...	3 tins
Fish	...	22 lbs.	Butter	...	5 lbs.
Salmon	...	10 tins	Margarine	...	6 lbs.
Pilchards	...	22 tins	Cheese	...	18 lbs.
Sardines	...	7 tins	Tea	...	20 lbs.
Herrings	...	11 tins	Pickles	...	5 jars

Mackerel	...	1 tin	Raisins	...	...	1 lb.
Condensed Milk	619	tins	Oranges	...	...	17 cases
Eggs	...	...	Lemons	...	...	2 cases
Peas	...	6 tins	Flour	...	...	11 stones
Beans	...	29 tins	Wheat Flakes	...	...	6 packets
Carrots	...	5 tins	Plums	...	...	2 tins
Vegetables	...	2 tins	Gooseberries	...	...	2 tins

All unsound food is dealt with at the Council's refuse destructor. In cases where there is a possibility of unsound food being salvaged full particulars are sent to the Salvage Officer at the Regional Offices of the Ministry of Food.

BILLETING.

During the year 1944 there was a considerable increase in the number of evacuees and refugees accommodated in the City. Shortly after the London area was attacked by flying bombs many people were billeted here after finding their own accommodation. During the month of August the City was asked to prepare for an official party of 200 evacuees. Only 143 arrived, but great difficulty was experienced in finding billets. As on previous occasions I was compelled to rely on voluntary workers for assistance, and these were recruited mainly from local school teachers and members of the W.V.S. The conditions were such that only short notice ~~should~~ be given regarding the arrival of these evacuees, but the chief difficulty was the very poor response by the majority of citizens who were asked to provide accommodation. In spite of this lack of co-operation, however, the difficulties were eventually overcome, and all evacuees who came to the district were accommodated within two days of their arrival. Incidentally, the attitude of some of the householders who complained of short notice did not change even when the evacuees had been here for some days, since great difficulty was experienced in finding billets in order to reduce the number of families accommodated at 19 The Close. Without exception, the complaints which were received were from those who were either compelled to take evacuees or who were afraid they might be asked to do their part. At the same time the public-spirited actions of those who did assist should not be overlooked. In some instances householders provided accommodation when it was known that they could do so only at considerable inconvenience to themselves. Moreover, it is significant that these citizens appeared to realise the difficulties under which the billeting arrangements had to be made.

THE LATE MR. J. PINCHES.

The year 1944 saw the passing of Mr. Pinches who had served the City as Sanitary Inspector for more than 30 years. In the early stages of his career as full-time Sanitary Inspector for the City, Mr. Pinches was engaged chiefly in the detection and suppression of gross nuisances, such as those caused by offensive accumulations and primitive sanitary conveniences. Like most of the sanitarians of his time he had many difficulties to overcome in enforcing legislation designed for improving the sanitary circumstances of the district. In a report prepared in 1911 Mr. Pinches referred to the difficulties of overcoming prejudices and old-established customs regarding the conditions under which food was prepared and exposed for sale. Among other things he said: "In this branch of my work in particular and to a great extent in general, I find that the nature and scope of an inspector's present-day work is even yet little understood, often misrepresented and under-estimated, and the disheartenment resulting therefrom during the past year has exceeded that of any previous experience."

Much progress in communal sanitation has been made since 1911, but the relative status of the Sanitary Inspector in local administration still leaves a great deal to be desired, chiefly because the value of his work is not adequately appreciated.

JOHN FINERON,

Sanitary Inspector.
